

Pre-Physical Therapy

Physical therapy is an allied health profession that focuses on the prevention and rehabilitation of various musculoskeletal injuries or problems. The ultimate goal of physical therapists is to facilitate the return of patients to pre-injury levels of functioning. Physical therapists are an integral part of any comprehensive health care team. They frequently work with other health care providers, such as physicians, occupational therapists, athletic trainers, nurses, dentists, psychologists, social workers, podiatrists, and speech pathologists and audiologists. Pre-physical therapy is a program of study, not an academic major. No specific academic major is required for pre-physical therapy. The majority of students will choose one of the following majors to complete their pre-physical therapy requirements:

- Kinesiology comprehensive major with emphasis in Human Performance
- Athletic Training comprehensive major
- Biology standard major with pre-professional health science or chemistry minor

Although a large number of physical therapists work in hospitals, a majority can be found in private physical therapy offices, rehabilitation centers, community health centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, corporate or industrial health centers, sports facilities, research institutions, schools, pediatric centers, and universities.

Admission Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree with any major from an accredited institution (required by most programs)
- Completion of all prerequisite courses
- Competitive overall and science GPAs (3.5 overall average for those accepted)
- Competitive Graduate Record Exam (GRE) score (required for some programs)
- Observational or work experience in physical therapy
- Letters of recommendation
- Completed application with Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) (for most programs)
- Face-to-face interview required by many programs

Required Pre-PT Courses: (Admission requirements and prerequisites may differ from school to school so it is important to check with schools for specific requirements.)

Courses	Required Credits	Suggested UWEC Courses
Human Anatomy and Physiology	2 semesters	BIOL 214 and 314 (8cr)
General Biology	1-2 semesters	BIOL 100 (4cr); 151 (4cr); 221 (4cr)
Chemistry	2 semesters	CHEM 103 and 104 (8cr)
Physics	2 semesters	PHYS 211 and 212 (9cr)
Mathematics	Statistics	MATH 246 (4cr)
Med Terminology	1 semester	NRS 220 (1cr)
Psychology	2-3 semesters	PSYC 100 (3cr); 230 (3cr); 251 (3cr)
Sociology	1 semester	SOC 101 (3cr)

Recommended Courses: The following courses are recommended by some physical therapy programs:

- KINS 304 Biomechanics
- KINS 308 Exercise Physiology
- MATH 111 or 114 Calculus

Non-Academic Considerations: All physical therapy programs require observational or actual work experience in physical therapy prior to admission. Check the admissions requirements for each physical therapy program to determine the minimum number of hours and types of settings for observation.

Graduate Record Exam (GRE): This standardized exam is required for admission to most physical therapy programs. The exam consists of 3 sections, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning and Analytical Writing. It is often taken in the spring semester or summer following the junior year. Go to: <http://www.ets.org/gre> for more information on the GRE

Suggested Pre-PT Curriculum: The following program is suggested for a student in any major. It is important that students work with a pre-PT advisor each semester. This is one example of how the pre-PT courses can be arranged.

Freshman year – Fall MATH* CHEM 103 BIOL 100 GE & Major courses	Freshman year – Spring PHYS211 KINS294 GE & Major courses
Sophomore year – Fall BIOL 214 CHEM 104 PSYC 100 KINS304 GE & Major courses	Sophomore year – Spring BIOL 314 MATH 246 PHYS212 PSYC230 Additional science course
Junior year – Fall PSYC251 KINS308 SOC 101 GE & Major courses (Prepare for GRE)	Junior year – Spring GE & Major courses (Take GRE and apply to schools in summer)
Senior year – Fall Complete Major/Minor/GE Additional recommended courses	Senior year – Spring Complete Major/Minor/GE Additional recommended courses

* Beginning course in mathematics depends on UWEC Mathematics Placement Exam score

UWEC Pre-PT Advisors:

Ms. Michelle Mattes (mattesm@uwec.edu)

Dr. Jeff Janot (janotjm@uwec.edu)

More Information:

- Mayo School of Health-Related Sciences (Rochester, MN) www.mayo.edu/education/education.html
- University of MN www.med.umn.edu/physther/
- University of Wisconsin – LaCrosse www.uwlax.edu/PT/
- University of Wisconsin – Madison www.orthorehab.wisc.edu/pt/program/index.shtml
- For a list of all schools: American Physical Therapy Association www.apta.org

Visit the Health Careers Center in Schofield Hall 30 or at www.uwec.edu/health-careers-center/index.htm and join the Pre-PT/ OT Club to learn more about healthcare, professional school applications, and physical therapy programs.